

March 7, 2011

Good afternoon/evening Chairs and Members of the Finance Committee. My name is Jerome Wiggins. I live in East Hartford, CT. I am a Post Korean-PreVietnam Veteran. I was a communication specialist and served in Korea and in Kansas. I served between Nov 1962-1965 and received an Honorable Discharge. After I came home I held various jobs and moved around often. I moved to CT in 1978 and found myself bouncing from shelter to shelter and having a substance abuse problem, which made it difficult to find stable work and housing.

In 2009, I was living at the VA Home in West Haven while going through their Substance Abuse Training Program (SATP) in Newington to get sober and drug free. I graduated from SATP program, and then VA counselors told me about Chrysalis Center's Veteran's Support Services and how they could help me with Supportive Housing and other services. I met with my new case worker from Chrysalis Center and she immediately helped me find affordable housing and connected me to another program at Chrysalis Center that helped me with the security deposit. She was also able to coordinate other services to help me maintain sobriety and improve my health.

I am here today to testify in support of Senate Bill 1008, the bonding bill that provides 30 million each year for Supportive Housing and 50 million for affordable housing. Since, I now have stable permanent housing and support services, my health has improved, and I have been substance free for almost 2 years. I am continuing to work on maintaining my sobriety and improving my health, so that I can give back to the community that has helped me.

Mr. Jerome Wiggins  
52-C Orchard St.  
East Hartford, CT 06118